

Management Team Meeting Minutes

Corrections Central Office

Sept 17 &18, 2007

Management Team Members Present: Mike Ferriter, Gayle Lambert, Steve Gibson, Steve Barry, Pam Bunke, Mike Mahoney, Rhonda Schaffer, Jo Acton, Bob Anez, & Diana Koch. Department staff present: John Daugherty, Curt Swenson, Kerry Pribnow & Ted Ward. Other agency staff: Pat Gervais & Brent Doig

Day one - Opening Statements:

The group reviewed and approved minutes of the last meeting. The director mentioned the Montana Correctional Association conference this week and his participation, and that the Governor's Awards for Excellence ceremony was scheduled for 2 p.m. of the 17th. He asked Steve Barry to be the representative of the department on the POST council. He discussed the idea of having everyone's Outlook calendars open for viewing. He gave a summary of the last meeting and asked for brief updates from various division administrators.

- Transportation at Riverside is being reviewed with the union.
- Passages transfers are going smoothly.
- Drivers license coordinator now hired at Montana State Prison.
- Meth treatment screenings are going well.
- OMIS lost key personnel.
- Monthly budget meetings with divisions should be happening.
- Media relations training went well and will be done internally.
- MSP unit determinations ruling next month.
- MWP still having issues with female warrants.

Administrator Reports:

Pam Bunke said that ACCD is hiring 19 P&P officers. Interviews will be held in October and the positions will start in November. Prerelease contract negotiations are moving forward. Staff assistance from the budget bureau was very helpful. The Passages program is dealing with offender pregnancy issues, including medical needs. The Soroptomist Club & SYSCO Corp. is helping with a culinary program at Passages that includes job placement options. A request for information on the sex offender treatment facility will be ready by the end of September. The group is exploring interest by the state's MSOTA providers and others. TSCTC is doing well but experiencing staff shortages due to employees being on military leave. MASC/MDIU temporary placement plan is working well.

Kerry Pribnow gave the management team a breakdown of options for the proposal for siting a northwest prerelease. Three draft options were outlined in a handout. There was group discussion and a decision was made that more research was needed. A survey on the need for prerelease beds in Northwestern Montana for native American females and clarification of cultural issues will be looked at in

greater detail. The possibility of moving females from Butte was an option. As a large portion of our population comes from the area, there is a need for prerelease beds in the northwestern region, so the team decided that the request for proposals (RFP) should include both male and female beds at two facilities, 40 beds in Flathead County and 20 in Lake County. Warden Mahoney also was willing to donate 20 beds from the sex offender treatment project to community corrections for the project.

Steve Gibson said that Pine Hills was reaccredited by the ACA. The Sacred Hoop journey went very well for Youth Services. Youth Services Division won a best practices award from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Mental health-related issues and incidents are the worst since 1995 at Pine Hills. They are having trouble getting professional staff to help deal with the issues. Statistics are being gathered from corrections, public health, courts and others to find a solution. They are working on a state level mental health facility for youth. YSD is using Dr. Harvey Milkman's prevention model and Dr. Lindsay Hayes's suicide prevention plan.

Diana Koch gave an overview of the cases legal is working on. Prosecutions of six youth from Pine Hills, paid lunch breaks and conditions of supervision were the main cases. The department is still dealing with the ACLU on Montana State Prison compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Whitney Hall was hired back with legal.

Jo Acton stated that union negotiations are completed and the contract is signed. Family day went very well. The kids had a great time. There was face painting, pictures and games. Narcotics detection certification was completed for two dogs. PREA training was completed for inmates, now focusing on intakes. Hoop journey also went very well at MWP. They now have a tepee for smudges and a talking circle.

Gayle Lambert said U.S. Sen. Jon Tester visited the industries program at Montana Women's Prison. He was very supportive of the MSU-Billings professional development program. Fifteen offenders participated in the first class. Montana State Prison will be starting those classes soon. Montana Correctional Enterprises is working on the conversion of the files for the license plate factory for the new plates.

John Daugherty (for Gary Hamel) let the group know that Richard Collins is the new PREA investigator. Megan Bourne, PREA coordinator, has been busy working with community corrections. He also reported that they were working on the SABHRS training reports. Project Argo is out for test and the team is working on the training piece.

Rhonda Schaffer said federal grants are available and being worked on. The responsibilities for grantees are being listed and organized in a guide. She mentioned that the Administrative and Financial Services Division has positions open and are in the hiring process. The RFP is also out for the offender banking and

canteen project. The director would like a presentation on indirect costs at the next meeting.

Bob Anez let the group know about recent newsworthy items. There were a few requests from the public on execution protocols, cultural diversity training and the assaults at Pine Hills. He is currently working on a presentation that gives an overview of the department. The governor's office asked Bob to help draft an executive order to reestablish the advisory council. He closed with Web-site updates and gave October as the release date of the next newsletter.

Mike Mahoney discussed the high-side construction project and it is going well. The state Architecture and Engineering Division will go to bid soon on the work dorm expansion. Deer Lodge County proposed using the jail for auxiliary sanction beds. He also mentioned a meeting with the city government on the fire services to the prison.

Steve Barry started with the need for a transgender offender policy. It was a consensus of the group to do preliminary research on the topic. Breast-feeding law becomes effective Oct. 1st and he discussed with the group what the needs were and what to expect.

Population Plan:

John Daugherty gave a brief overview of the new draft population report. There are a few changes to a few categories and the way it looks. See handout.

Current Budget Status:

Rhonda Schaffer handed out the FY07 year-end closing report and the end of September budget status report and went over them with the team. See handouts.

Ethics Action Plan:

Curt Swenson moderated this discussion. The team discussed the outcomes from the training that the top-level managers of the department attended. The recommendations of the small group discussions were itemized and reviewed. The two main topics were communication and vision/goals. The consensus was that a draft plan from each division administrator would be put together and then discussed at the next meeting. They would then share those with the managers that attended the training for feedback. The management team would then share the final plan with the department.

Day two – Miscellaneous Items:

Director Ferriter started day two off with the escorted leave policy. Escorted leave, normally used for funerals of family of inmates, is an issue that is a delicate balance between facility security, public safety and family needs. The discussion topics

included reviewing what other states do, definitions of “family” members, relationship verification, security levels/risk assessments, visitation alternatives/accommodations, jurisdictional issues, native American culture and notification timeframes. A plan will be drafted to resolve these issues.

Division Review:

After a long discussion of ideas and draft plans, the director – with support of the management team – decided to reassign a few positions. The Investigations and Compliance Monitoring Bureau will be divided into two units. Bureau Chief Bill Fleiner will continue to head the Investigations Bureau and report directly to Director Ferriter. The new unit will include the following functions: compliance monitoring; emergency preparedness, response and planning; safety; and a new risk management program. Risk management will include such issues as workers compensation, liability, property casualty insurance reporting and facility management. That new unit, yet to be named, will be located in the Health, Planning and Information Services Division.

Sharon Smith, the current staff of the compliance monitoring office, will be joined by two additional employees. Those two positions were “donated” by other portions of the department. Gary Hamel will develop a plan for operation of the new unit.

Ted Ward was hired as the information technology trainer in Human Resources Division. Myrna Omholt-Mason, who has been administrative assistant in the director’s office, will replace Ward as executive assistant to the director. The director’s office will share an administrative assistant position with the Legal Services Bureau and will assume some of Omholt-Mason’s duties, including receptionist for the department. Bob Anez will supervise Sally Hilander, the department’s victim information specialist. The changes will take effect Oct. 1.

LFD Goals:

Rhonda Schaffer led the discussion. She covered the five main topics that we will submit to the Legislative Finance Committee. These include the Northwestern Montana prerelease center, probation and parole’s contracts with chemical-dependency counselors, the department’s goal to manage 80 percent of offenders outside of prison, youth re-entry efforts, and community treatment/revocation programs. These were discussed and agreed upon. The committee will then decide which ones they will measure.

HR Discussions:

Mike Mahoney stated that a topic of interest to him is employee suspension without pay versus with pay during an investigation that clearly has a criminal implication. After opinions on the matter were stated, Steve Barry explained that due process was the reasoning behind suspension with pay. Legal, investigations and human resources staffs are working together to fine tune the process and to minimize the

time it takes to investigate all matters. Criminal and labor laws are two separate entities and both have specific processes that have to be followed.

Adjourn:

There was no public comment. Next meeting will be in December.

Condensed and submitted by:

Ted Ward, Director's Office, Department of Corrections